

Update: October 2015

Milestones of PARCC Assessments in English Language Arts and Mathematics

The PASS model refers to the term "parent" as any adult who plays an important role in a child's family life.

PARCC Score Release Update – The New Jersey Department of education is looking forward to sharing PARCC results and remains committed to ensuring that New Jersey educators are prepared to use assessment data as one tool to measure and ensure academic progress, inform instruction and improve student learning. With equal commitment, the DOE places great value on the opportunity to help educators closely partner with parents to use the information gained from the PARCC reports to support their child's learning.

On October 7, 2015, Chief Performance Officer/Assistant Commissioner of Data, Research, Evaluation and Reporting provided the New Jersey State Board of Education with [this presentation](#), which gives an overview of the resources that have been developed to support discussions surrounding the student score reports, including video presentations for principals and parents.

The release of PARCC scores creates an important opportunity to share an update on the state's expectations for student learning (Common Core Standards) and the measurement of that learning (the PARCC Assessment).

Governor Chris Christie has taken an active leadership role in ensuring that New Jersey students receive the highest-quality education and that each student reach his or her greatest success.

Student Testing and Assessment

- On July 14, 2014, Governor Christie appointed a *Study Commission on the Use of Student Assessments in New Jersey*, as mandated by Executive Order No. 159. The Commission is to make recommendations to the Governor regarding the quality and effectiveness of student assessments administered to K-12 students in New Jersey.

The commission was charged to consider and make recommendations on the volume, frequency and impact of student assessments occurring throughout New Jersey school districts. The [preliminary report](#) is available for review on the state website.

The **Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)** is a group of states that work together to develop and refine current assessment tools that measure student learning of the Common Core Standards. The assessment is aligned with the high academic standards of the Common Core in English language arts and mathematics.

Expert educators from New Jersey collaborated with experts in other states and created the PARCC assessment. They continue to refine the assessment to best meet student needs for the 21st century.

PARCC is designed to address four main purposes:

- To monitor and support students' progress toward learning goals from third grade through graduation;
- To provide educators with timely data that informs student instruction;
- To provide parents with data on their child's performance and to create a basis for home/school partnerships to effectively engage in their child's academic learning; and
- To enable students to build a successful pathway to college and career by the end of high school.

Academic standards, personal student learning goals, and the performance scales within assessments such as PARCC, influence instructional decisions and provide a reliable baseline for supporting student learning and provides the ability to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in preparation for the next grade level and their choices of college or a career after graduation.

The PARCC assessment is based on high academic standards in English language arts and mathematics. In 2010 New Jersey adopted the Common Core Standards. Local educators received training to develop new classroom curriculum, lesson plans and programs to better prepare students for their next grade level and college and career. The PARCC assessment is aligned with those standards and measures student learning of their classroom instruction.

- In 2014, New Jersey field-tested PARCC to a total of more than 60,000 students in 1,276 schools (approximately 58 percent of all schools with tested grade levels) in 445 of New Jersey's 637 "local education agencies," which includes school districts and charter schools. The field- test included items in both English language arts and mathematics. During and after the field-tests New Jersey educators learned from our students' experiences. Successes, challenges and logistical problems were addressed and all NJ school districts prepared to administer the PARCC assessment.
- PARCC assessments were administered statewide in spring 2015. PARCC included accessibility features and accommodations for appropriate students.
- May 2015 marked the end of the first full PARCC administration in New Jersey.
- Nearly five million students in 11 states and the District of Columbia completed more than 17 million online test sessions.
- September 10, 2015, after several months of work from New Jersey education experts and others in the PARCC consortium, the PARCC governing body set five student performance levels to measure student proficiency levels. The performance levels are what give meaning to the scores that students receive. Educators reviewed actual student results and compared them to learning and developmental expectations. This first year of the assessment, student performance levels, or "[cut scores](#)" as they are called, are based on the performance of all students.

PARCC uses five performance levels that delineate the knowledge, skills, and practices students are able to demonstrate:

- Level 1: Minimal Understanding
- Level 2: Partial Understanding
- Level 3: Moderate Understanding
- Level 4: Strong Understanding
- Level 5: Distinguished Understanding

- Confidential reports will be prepared and sent to educators and parents before the end of 2015. In future years student proficiency levels will be available shortly after students take the assessment.
- Parents whose child did not take the PARCC assessment will not have PARCC achievement information to discuss with their child's teachers. No child should be excluded from the opportunity to improve their learning; therefore, parents should speak with educators at their child's school if they do not have PARCC assessment information for their child.

Review of PARCC Major Milestones

2010

- PARCC states submit application and are awarded grants to develop a common set of next generation K-12 assessments in English language arts and mathematics.
- PARCC state content teams and others begin meeting to focus on design and development of the PARCC assessment system.

2011

- The PARCC Governing Board, including many NJ experts, approves refinements to the original PARCC design, creating the annual tests and optional instructional tools.
- PARCC states formally engage colleges and universities in the work.
- PARCC releases draft Model Content Frameworks for English Language Literacy and Mathematics to inform item development and help support state and district implementation of the standards.

2012

- Item development begins.
- Teams of K-16 educators from PARCC states meet in Chicago for the first Educator Leader Cadre meeting.
- The states release final Model Content Frameworks for English language arts/literacy and release item and task prototypes.
- PARCC states hold the first item review committee meeting to review PARCC passages. Item review committees meet regularly to review items and passages.
- PARCC state K-12 and higher education chiefs adopt a College- and Career-Ready Determination policy and policy-level performance-level descriptors (PLDs).
- PARCC states release final Model Content Frameworks for mathematics.
- PARCC states approve PARCC's retest policy and the final high school mathematics tests: Integrated Mathematics III and Algebra II.

2013

- Small-scale research studies begins in select PARCC states, including NJ.
- PARCC Inc. nonprofit is launched to manage the development of PARCC's next-generation assessments for the PARCC states.
- PARCC states release initial performance-level descriptors for all grades/courses in English language arts/literacy and mathematics, the accommodations manual, and cost estimates for the PACC annual tests; no costs to taxpayers.

2014

- One million students in the PARCC states in 16,000 schools field-test the assessment — a "test of the test."
- A few thousand students in high schools with "block schedules" are the first to participate in PARCC testing.

2015

- Five million students in 12 states (11 states plus the District of Columbia) complete a PARCC test.
- Governing Board announces design changes that shorten the test and combine the former two test windows into one.
- Teachers and other educators and experts from PARCC states gather in July and August to determine the range of scores that qualify for each performance level.
- PARCC sends information to states to calculate state-by-state information.
- States send individual student score reports to parents in late fall. School, district and state results will be shared publicly.

Keep up-to-date at: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/assessment/> and <http://www.parcconline.org/search?q=changes&Search=>.

*The New Jersey Department of Education's model for home/school partnerships – **The Parent Academy for Student Success (PASS)** provides documents and support tools intended to complement information about the state's academic standards and annual assessments for students. The PASS model provides resources, materials, and opportunities for parents and educators to build home/school partnerships in the best interest of students' academic success. For information on the NJDOE PASS model go to: <http://www.state.nj.us/education/sca/toolkit/>. Please send questions to: informccss@doe.state.nj.us.*